

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT JOSPEH KRAFT OP-ED COLUMN NEW YORK
TIMES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, HEADED "THEY REMEMBER THE
FUTURE."

2. WHO IS OBSESSED BY THE DEAD HAND OF THE PAST? IS IT
JIMMY CARTER IN NAMING SO MANY FORMER OFFICIALS TO HIS ADMIN-
ISTRATION? OR HIS CRITICS WHO SEE PORTENTS OF ANOTHER
VIETNAM?

3. MY STRONG IMPRESSION--NOW AS BEFORE THE CABINET WAS NAM-
ED--IS THAT CARTER WAS BOUND TO SURROUND HIMSELF WITH EXPER-
IENCED PEOPLE. THE CRITICS, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE GOING
THROUGH THE FAMILIAR EXERCISE IN BEFUDDLEMENT KNOWN AS "RE-
MEMBERING THE FUTURE."

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4. CARTER AND HIS AIDES, TO BE SURE, TALKED ABOUT "UNKNOWNNS"
AND "NEW FACES" DURING THE CAMPAIGN. BUT THEIR OWN PERFOR-
MANCE DURING THE CAMPAIGN DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY KNEW NEXT
TO NOTHING ABOUT RUNNING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. IN PARTICU-
LAR THEY ARE INNOCENT WHEN IT CAME TO THE MAJOR BUSINESS OF

MANAGING NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY.

5. WHEN THE SEARCH BEGAN AFTER THE ELECTION, A HOST OF KNOWLEDGEABLE FORMER OFFICIALS CAME FORWARD. THE JOHNNY SIX-PACKS, TO USE A GENERIC TERM FOR THE UNDISCOVERED ROUGH DIAMONDS, WEREN'T THERE. SO ALL THE MAJOR JOBS IN FOREIGN POLICY WENT TO MEN WITH A PAST.

6. NOT A FEW OF THESE, OF COURSE, HELD OFFICE DURING THE VIETNAM WAR. CYRUS VANCE, WHO IS TO BE SECRETARY OF STATE, SERVED AT THE PENTAGON DURING MOST OF THE BUILDUP YEARS. DITTO FOR HAROLD BROWN, WHO HAS BEEN APPOINTED SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. THEODORE SORENSEN, WHO WILL BE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, WAS IN THE KENNEDY WHITE HOUSE WHEN THE EARLY COMMITMENTS WERE MADE AND ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, CARTER'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, WAS AT THE POLICY PLANNING STAFF OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT FROM 1966 TO 1968.

7. BUT NONE OF THESE MEN PLAYED LEAD ROLES IN PLUNGING THE COUNTRY INTO VIETNAM. THE WORST THAT CAN BE SAID AGAINST VANCE AND BROWN IS THAT THEY WAITED TOO LONG BEFORE AIRING THEIR DOUBTS. SORENSEN, WHO WAS DUBIOUS OF THE COMMITMENT DURING THE KENNEDY YEARS, AND BRZEZINSKI, WHO WAS PREOCCUPIED WITH EUROPEAN BUSINESS, WERE CLEARLY MARGINAL FIGURES.

8. ALL OF THEM, MOREOVER, HAVE LEARNED THE LESSON AND ARE NOW ACTIVELY IDENTIFIED WITH PROPOSALS (NOTABLY IN SUPPORTING ARMS CONTROL AND BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE THIRD WORLD) THAT GO AGAINST HYSTERICAL ANTI-COMMUNISM, OVERMILITARIZATION
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TION AND EXCESSIVE SECRECY. INDEED, ONE DANGER, GIVEN THE PREVAILING NATIONAL TEMPER, IS THAT THE CARTER FOREIGN POLICY ADVISERS WILL SHRINK FROM USING THE THREAT OF FORCE AGAINST COMMUNIST PRESSURE.

9. THE ONLY SERIOUS DANGER OF OVERCOMMITMENT LIES IN THE PLACE MOST NEGLECTED IN THE PAST--AFRICA. ANDREW YOUNG, THE BLACK CONGRESSMAN FROM ATLANTA WHO WILL BE UNITED NATIONS AMBASSADOR, HAS EXPRESSED, WITH THE APPARENT APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENT-ELECT, THE VIEW THAT THIS COUNTRY HAS TO SHOW ITS GOOD FAITH BY SUPPORTING BLACK RULE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

10. IN FACT, THE UNITED STATES HAS ONLY THE MOST LIMITED NATIONAL INTEREST IN AFRICA. WITH SOUTH AFRICA ALMOST CERTAIN TO GO SMASH, THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE FAR BETTER OFF STANDING ALOOF AND HELPING TO PICK UP THE PIECES THAN STEPPING FRONT AND CENTER AND CATCHING THE BLAME.

11. BUT THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS AHEAD LIE IN THE DOMESTIC, NOT THE FOREIGN, POLICY FIELDS. THE TRUE SOURCE OF PERIL, MORE-OVER, IS THAT THOSE WHO ARE NOW CRITICIZING THE CARTER CABINET MOST VEHEMENTLY HAVE NOT LEARNED THE LESSON OF THE PAST.
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12. THE CARTER CRITICS CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR MORE EXTRAVAGANT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS. THEY DREAM DREAMS OF THE GREAT SOCIETY, BELIEVING IT WAS UNDONE ONLY BY VIETNAM. THEY WANT MORE MONEY SPENT ON HEALTH CARE, ON CITIES, ON EDUCATION AND ON MASS TRANSIT. THEY FAVOR MORE STRINGENT STANDARDS ON WATER AND AIR POLLUTION. THEY WOULD CLOSE ALL LOOPHOLES IN THE TAX CODE.

13. BUT THE LESSON OF THE LAST THREE ELECTIONS IS THAT THE MAJORITY DOES NOT FAVOR THE LIBERAL PROGRAM, AND CAN BE BROUGHT TO SUPPORT TRULY REACTIONARY LEADERS UNLESS THERE IS A GOOD-FAITH EFFORT TO CURTAIL GOVERNMENT SPENDING. THE WORK ETHIC REALLY IS DILUTED BY HIGHER UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.
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FITS, AND PROGRAMS SUCH AS MEDICAID ACTUALLY DO DRIVE UP HEALTH COSTS FOR EVERYBODY. WHAT ARE LOOPHOLES TO SOME ARE INCENTIVES TO OTHERS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION CAN CURTAIL THE ECONOMIC GROWTH THAT IS A FIRST ESSENTIAL FOR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL WELL-BEING.

14. OF COURSE, MAN CAN LEARN FROM HISTORY. BUT NOT BY "REMEMBERING THE PAST," NOT BY RIGIDLY APPLYING UNCONNECTED HAPPENINGS TO RADICALLY CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES--WHICH IS THE CASE OF THOSE WHO THINK THE WORLD IS AGOG WITH VIETNAMS. ON THE CONTRARY, HISTORY IS A TEACHER ONLY TO THOSE WHO DO WHAT THE CARTER CRITICS REFUSE TO DO--WHICH IS TO EXAMINE THE UNINTENDED BAD CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR OWN BEST IMPULSES.
(END TEXT)
ROBINSON

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